

At the Doorway of the Promised Land

31 OCT – 6 NOV 2017

NU 14-36

Week 7 --- 43 Weeks to Go

Numbers might be a sad account of the stubbornness of the Israelites if it were not for God’s faithfulness and protection. God remains faithful to getting Israel to the Promised Land, even when Israel, and Moses himself, disobey God. God keeps his promises. Numbers addresses the issues of keeping faith from generation to generation. We end Numbers with a new generation of Israelites at the doorway to the land of Canaan – the Promised Land. Paul teaches (1 Corinthians 10: 11-13) that the events in Numbers are recorded for our instruction, that we may endure and escape temptation. How does the story of a past generation become the story today?

Weekly Reading Plan

Day 1: NU 14:1 – 16:50
Day 2: NU 17:1 - 20:13
Day 3: NU 20:14 – 23:30
Day 4: NU 24:1 – 27:23
Day 5: NU 28:1 – 31:54
Day 6: NU 32:1 – 34:29
Day 7: NU 35:1 – 36:13

Outline

Israel in the Wilderness [Day 1-2]
Failure with the Moabites [Day 3-4]
Reorganization of Israel [Day4-5]
Wandering in the Wilderness [Day 6]
The conquest and division of Israel [Day 7]

Key Characters

Moses	Aaron
12 tribes	Eleazar
Joshua	Caleb
Korah	Dathan
Abiram	Balak
Balaam	

Key Locations

Sinai Desert Wilderness
Desert of Zin
Kadesh
Edom
Mount Hor
Sihon and Og
Plains of Moab

Key Terms

Wandering
Wilderness
Unbelief
Manna
Offerings
Festivals
Cities of Refuge

Key Verses

“The Lord said to Moses, “How long will this people spurn Me? And how long will they not believe in Me, despite all the signs which I have performed in their midst?” [NU 14:11]

“The Lord is slow to anger, abounding in love and forgiving sin and rebellion. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children for sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation.” [NU 14:18-19]

“Not one of the men who saw my glory and the miraculous signs I performed in Egypt and in the desert but who disobeyed me and tested me ten times – not one of them will ever see the land I promised on oath to their forefathers.” [NU 14:22-23]

But the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, “Because you did not trust in me enough to honor me as holy in the sight of the Israelites, you will not bring this community into the land I give them [NU: 20:12]

EPOCH 3
(1500 – 1200 BC)

Chapter Summaries (from @biblesummary)

Nu14: The people grumbled so the LORD said that they would spend forty years in the wilderness. They went up to the land but were defeated.

Nu15: There is one law for you and for strangers. Make an offering if you sin unintentionally. Anyone who sins defiantly shall be cut off.

Nu16: Korah, Dathan and Abiram rose against Moses and Aaron. Moses said, "The LORD will choose." The ground swallowed up those with Korah.

Nu17: The LORD told Moses to bring a staff from each tribal leader to the Tent of Meeting to stop the grumbling. Aaron's staff blossomed.

Nu18: The LORD told Aaron: "I have given you the Levites to work at the Tent of Meeting. Everything that is devoted to the LORD is yours."

Nu19: Burn a heifer outside the camp for the water of cleansing. Anyone who is unclean and does not cleanse themselves shall be cut off.

Nu20: The LORD told Moses to speak to a rock to produce water but he struck the rock. Edom refused Israel passage. Aaron died at Mount Hor.

Nu21: The people grumbled so the LORD sent snakes. Moses made a bronze snake and whoever looked at it lived. Israel defeated the Amorites.

Nu22: Balak sent for Balaam to curse Israel. Balaam's donkey warned him. The Angel of the LORD said, "Go, but speak only what I tell you."

Nu23: The LORD gave Balaam a word: "How can I curse whom God has not cursed?" Then at another place: "The LORD their God is with Israel."

Nu24: Balaam gave a word: "How lovely are your tents, O Jacob." Balak was angry. Balaam said: "A star and a scepter shall rise in Israel."

Nu25: The people were unfaithful with Moabite women and worshipped their gods. Phinehas killed one couple and the LORD commended his zeal.

Nu26: The LORD told Moses and Eleazar to take a census. There were 601,730 fighting men and 23,000 Levites. Only Joshua and Caleb remained.

Nu27: The daughters of Zelophehad were given an inheritance. The LORD told Moses that he was to die. Moses commissioned Joshua as leader.

Chapter Summaries (from @biblesummary)

Nu28: Bring offerings each morning and evening, on the Sabbath and on the first of the month. Celebrate Passover and the Feast of Weeks.

Nu29: In the seventh month on first day sound the trumpets; on the tenth day make atonement; on the fifteenth day celebrate for seven days.

Nu30: When a man makes a vow he must not break his word. When a woman makes a vow it shall stand unless her father or husband forbids it.

Nu31: The LORD told Moses to take vengeance on the Midianites. The Israelites killed the men, burned their cities and divided the spoils.

Nu32: Reuben and Gad asked to settle in Gilead. Moses agreed if they helped to conquer the land, so Reuben, Gad and Manasseh built cities.

Nu33: The Israelites journeyed from Egypt. In the fortieth year Aaron died. They camped by the Jordan and the LORD said, "Take the land."

Nu34: Your borders in Canaan shall be Edom, the Great Sea, Mount Hor and the Jordan. Eleazar and Joshua shall divide the land among you.

Nu35: You shall give cities to the Levites. Appoint cities of refuge for anyone who has killed accidentally. A murderer shall be put to death.

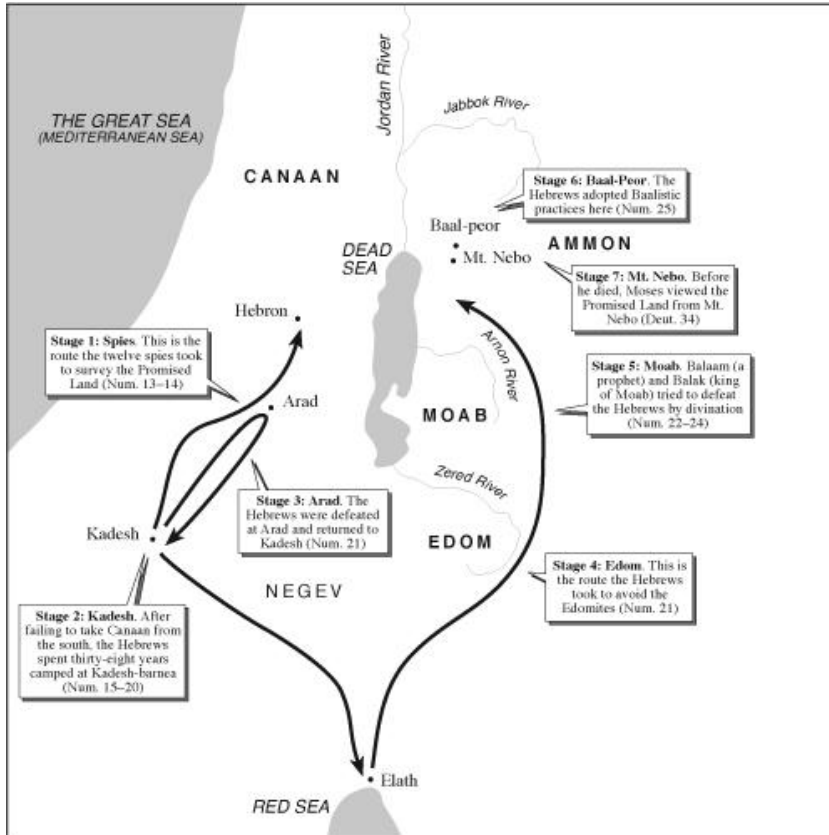
Nu36: The clan of Gilead asked about Zelophehad's daughters. Moses said, "Daughters who inherit land must marry within their own tribe."

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The Camp of Israel

The Camp of Reuben (Man)		W	The Camp of Ephraim (Ox)	
Reuben	46,500	Camp of Ephraim (108,100)	Ephraim	40,500
Simeon	59,300		Manasseh	32,200
Gad	<u>45,600</u>		Benjamin	<u>35,400</u>
151,400			108,100	
SW		Ox	NW	
S	Camp of Reuben (151,400)	Man	Levi	Eagle
SE		Lion	NE	
The Camp of Judah (Lion)		Camp of Judah (186,400)	The Camp of Dan (Eagle)	
Judah:	74,600		Dan	62,700
Issachar	4,400		Naphtali	53,400
Zebulun	<u>57,400</u>	Asher	<u>41,500</u>	
186,400			157,600	
		E		

Notes for Discussion

What did I learn about God?

What did I learn about human nature?

How does what I read apply to my life and my relationship with God?

Insights about the time and/or customs?

Other thoughts

WEEK 7 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What did I learn about God?

- What is significant about God's display of His glory (NU 14:10-12)? Is God's anger with the Israelites justified? Why would He want to start all over again with Moses? How is God's character reflected in NU 14:18?
- Why does God allow the Levites and priests to eat the sacrifices made to him even the "first and finest"? What does this teach about the meaning of temple workers in God's eyes?
- Why is Moses unable to enter the promised land as a punishment when he strikes the rock in NU 20?
- Why is sin so offensive to the Lord? What is it particularly about idol worship that angers Him most?

What did I learn about human nature?

- Within reach of the promised land, the Israelites pull back from their goal. Why do you think they do this? What are their specific complaints? (NU 14) Based on the report of the spies, are their fears valid?
- How do the duties of the priests and Levites provide for the spiritual health of the Israelites? How would they fare without such leaders? How might material concerns damage the ability of the priests and Levites to adequately complete their job?
- What are some modern cultural practices that could erode the purity of the Christian faith? Which of these do you consider the most dangerous?
- What would Joshua's commissioning before Moses died do for Joshua? For the people? What would Joshua most need in order to successfully take over from Moses?

What did I learn about my life/relationship with God?

- How does the composite picture of God in this story (NU 14) compare to your own experience of Him? Where would you place yourself in the story? How has God helped you to reach "insurmountable" goals or helped you overcome "giants" in your path? How does God help you overcome your fears?
- The Israelites were instructed to make offerings to the Lord, sacrificing something in His name. How does that relate to us today? What do you have to offer to God?
- What "enemies" (people or things that keep us from doing God's work) do we face in our everyday life? How are these enemies similar to those facing ancient Israel?
- What serves as a daily reminder of what God has done for you? In what sense are your daily reminders similar to what the Israelites offer daily?

Shared Time/Culture Insights

- What does it mean to "bless" [NU 26:58]? What is the priestly blessing?
- Given the open living conditions of life in the desert, why would the special regulations to limit contact with the dead bodies and restrict food be necessary for ancient Israel?